

tion only if the Board issues a certificate authorizing such activity under subsection (c).

(b) A proceeding to grant authority under subsection (a) of this section begins when an application is filed. On receiving the application, the Board shall give reasonable public notice of the beginning of such proceeding.

(c) The Board shall issue a certificate authorizing activities for which such authority is requested in an application filed under subsection (b) unless the Board finds that such activities are inconsistent with the public convenience and necessity. Such certificate may approve the application as filed, or with modifications, and may require compliance with conditions (other than labor protection conditions) the Board finds necessary in the public interest.

(d) The Board shall require any Class II rail carrier which receives a certificate under subsection (c) of this section to provide a fair and equitable arrangement for the protection of the interests of employees who may be affected thereby. The arrangement shall consist exclusively of one year of severance pay, which shall not exceed the amount of earnings from railroad employment of the employee during the 12-month period immediately preceding the date on which the application for such certificate is filed with the Board. The amount of such severance pay shall be reduced by the amount of earnings from railroad employment of the employee with the acquiring carrier during the 12-month period immediately following the effective date of the transaction to which the certificate applies. The parties may agree to terms other than as provided in this subsection. The Board shall not require such an arrangement from a Class III rail carrier which receives a certificate under subsection (c) of this section.

(Added Pub. L. 104-88, title I, §102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 823.)

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 10902, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1403, related to authorizing action by rail carriers to provide adequate, efficient, and safe facilities.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Jan. 1, 1996, except as otherwise provided in Pub. L. 104-88, see section 2 of Pub. L. 104-88, set out as a note under section 1301 of this title.

§ 10903. Filing and procedure for application to abandon or discontinue

(a)(1) A rail carrier providing transportation subject to the jurisdiction of the Board under this part who intends to—

(A) abandon any part of its railroad lines; or

(B) discontinue the operation of all rail transportation over any part of its railroad lines,

must file an application relating thereto with the Board. An abandonment or discontinuance may be carried out only as authorized under this chapter.

(2) When a rail carrier providing transportation subject to the jurisdiction of the Board under this part files an application, the application shall include—

(A) an accurate and understandable summary of the rail carrier's reasons for the proposed abandonment or discontinuance;

(B) a statement indicating that each interested person is entitled to make recommendations to the Board on the future of the rail line; and

(C)(i) a statement that the line is available for subsidy or sale in accordance with section 10904 of this title, (ii) a statement that the rail carrier will promptly provide to each interested party an estimate of the annual subsidy and minimum purchase price, calculated in accordance with section 10904 of this title, and (iii) the name and business address of the person who is authorized to discuss the subsidy or sale terms for the rail carrier.

(3) The rail carrier shall—

(A) send by certified mail notice of the application to the chief executive officer of each State that would be directly affected by the proposed abandonment or discontinuance;

(B) post a copy of the notice in each terminal and station on each portion of a railroad line proposed to be abandoned or over which all transportation is to be discontinued;

(C) publish a copy of the notice for 3 consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in each county in which each such portion is located;

(D) mail a copy of the notice, to the extent practicable, to all shippers that have made significant use (as designated by the Board) of the railroad line during the 12 months preceding the filing of the application; and

(E) attach to the application filed with the Board an affidavit certifying the manner in which subparagraphs (A) through (D) of this paragraph have been satisfied, and certifying that subparagraphs (A) through (D) have been satisfied within the most recent 30 days prior to the date the application is filed.

(b)(1) Except as provided in subsection (d), abandonment and discontinuance may occur as provided in section 10904.

(2) The Board shall require as a condition of any abandonment or discontinuance under this section provisions to protect the interests of employees. The provisions shall be at least as beneficial to those interests as the provisions established under sections 11326(a) and 24706(c)¹ of this title before May 31, 1998.

(c)(1) In this subsection, the term "potentially subject to abandonment" has the meaning given the term in regulations of the Board. The regulations may include standards that vary by region of the United States and by railroad or group of railroads.

(2) Each rail carrier shall maintain a complete diagram of the transportation system operated, directly or indirectly, by the rail carrier. The rail carrier shall submit to the Board and publish amendments to its diagram that are necessary to maintain the accuracy of the diagram. The diagram shall—

(A) include a detailed description of each of its railroad lines potentially subject to abandonment; and

(B) identify each railroad line for which the rail carrier plans to file an application to abandon or discontinue under subsection (a) of this section.

¹ See References in Text note below.

(d) A rail carrier providing transportation subject to the jurisdiction of the Board under this part may—

- (1) abandon any part of its railroad lines; or
- (2) discontinue the operation of all rail transportation over any part of its railroad lines;

only if the Board finds that the present or future public convenience and necessity require or permit the abandonment or discontinuance. In making the finding, the Board shall consider whether the abandonment or discontinuance will have a serious, adverse impact on rural and community development.

(e) Subject to this section and sections 10904 and 10905 of this title, if the Board—

- (1) finds public convenience and necessity, it shall—
 - (A) approve the application as filed; or
 - (B) approve the application with modifications and require compliance with conditions that the Board finds are required by public convenience and necessity; or
- (2) fails to find public convenience and necessity, it shall deny the application.

(Added Pub. L. 104-88, title I, §102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 823; amended Pub. L. 112-141, div. C, title II, §32932(b), July 6, 2012, 126 Stat. 829.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 24706(c) of this title, referred to in subsec. (b)(2), was repealed by Pub. L. 105-134, title I, §142(a), Dec. 2, 1997, 111 Stat. 2576, effective 180 days after Dec. 2, 1997.

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 10903, Pub. L. 95-473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1403; Pub. L. 96-448, title IV, §402(a), Oct. 14, 1980, 94 Stat. 1941; Pub. L. 98-216, §2(14), Feb. 14, 1984, 98 Stat. 5; Pub. L. 103-272, §5(m)(24), July 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 1378, related to authorizing abandonment and discontinuance of railroad lines and rail transportation.

AMENDMENTS

2012—Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 112-141 substituted “24706(c) of this title before May 31, 1998” for “24706(c) of this title”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2012 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 112-141 effective Oct. 1, 2012, see section 3(a) of Pub. L. 112-141, set out as an Effective and Termination Dates of 2012 Amendment note under section 101 of Title 23, Highways.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Jan. 1, 1996, except as otherwise provided in Pub. L. 104-88, see section 2 of Pub. L. 104-88, set out as a note under section 1301 of this title.

RAILROAD BRANCHLINE ABANDONMENTS BY BURLINGTON NORTHERN RAILROAD IN NORTH DAKOTA

Pub. L. 97-102, title IV, §402, Dec. 23, 1981, 95 Stat. 1465, as amended by Pub. L. 102-143, title III, §343, Oct. 28, 1991, 105 Stat. 948, provided that: “Notwithstanding any other provision of law or of this Act, none of the funds provided in this or any other Act shall hereafter be used by the Interstate Commerce Commission to approve railroad branchline abandonments in the State of North Dakota by the entity generally known as the Burlington Northern Railroad, or its agents or assignees, in excess of a total of 350 miles, except that exempt abandonments and discontinuances that are effectuated pursuant to section 1152.50 of title 49 of the Code

of Federal Regulations after the date of enactment of the Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1992 [Oct. 28, 1991], shall not apply toward such 350-mile limit: *Provided*, That this section shall be in lieu of section 311 (amendment numbered 93) as set forth in the conference report and the joint explanatory statement of the committee of conference on the Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1982 (H.R. 4209), filed in the House of Representatives on November 13, 1981 (H. Rept. No. 97-331).” [Section 311 of H.R. 4209 is section 311 of Pub. L. 97-102, title III, Dec. 23, 1981, 95 Stat. 1460, which is not classified to the Code.] Similar provisions were contained in Pub. L. 97-92, title IV, §115, Dec. 15, 1981, 95 Stat. 1196.

[Interstate Commerce Commission abolished and functions of Commission transferred, except as otherwise provided in Pub. L. 104-88, to Surface Transportation Board effective Jan. 1, 1996, by section 1302 of this title, and section 101 of Pub. L. 104-88, set out as a note under section 1301 of this title. References to Interstate Commerce Commission deemed to refer to Surface Transportation Board, a member or employee of the Board, or Secretary of Transportation, as appropriate, see section 205 of Pub. L. 104-88, set out as a note under section 1301 of this title.]

§ 10904. Offers of financial assistance to avoid abandonment and discontinuance

(a) In this section—

(1) the term “avoidable cost” means all expenses that would be incurred by a rail carrier in providing transportation that would not be incurred if the railroad line over which the transportation was provided were abandoned or if the transportation were discontinued. Expenses include cash inflows foregone and cash outflows incurred by the rail carrier as a result of not abandoning or discontinuing the transportation. Cash inflows foregone and cash outflows incurred include—

- (A) working capital and required capital expenditure;
- (B) expenditures to eliminate deferred maintenance;
- (C) the current cost of freight cars, locomotives, and other equipment; and
- (D) the foregone tax benefits from not retiring properties from rail service and other effects of applicable Federal and State income taxes; and

(2) the term “reasonable return” means—

- (A) if a rail carrier is not in reorganization, the cost of capital to the rail carrier, as determined by the Board; and
- (B) if a rail carrier is in reorganization, the mean cost of capital of rail carriers not in reorganization, as determined by the Board.

(b) Any rail carrier which has filed an application for abandonment or discontinuance shall provide promptly to a party considering an offer of financial assistance and shall provide concurrently to the Board—

- (1) an estimate of the annual subsidy and minimum purchase price required to keep the line or a portion of the line in operation;
- (2) its most recent reports on the physical condition of that part of the railroad line involved in the proposed abandonment or discontinuance;
- (3) traffic, revenue, and other data necessary to determine the amount of annual financial